

# HARAMBEE FLAME!

VOL. XII No. 8

AUGUST 1991



## In This Issue:

EDITORIAL: African Youth & The KKK; FROM  
OTHER SOURCES: Concern About Malcolm X Film,  
Prisoners In Louisiana Protest Execution,  
Panther Militia To Launch Patrols, Funding  
Of Inkatha, etc.; POETRY: Chambers On Legis-  
lature.

# HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga (Chairman) - "Black Gold" Billups  
Eso/Alakoso Asha (Sgt.-at-Arms) - Donald Reed  
Olotu Eko (Educ. Chrmn.) - Mondo  
Akowe (Secretary) - Willie Tucker  
Eleto (Admin. Chrmn.) - Sylvester Jones  
Akapo (Treasurer) - Hasan Muhammad  
Akewi (Librarian) - Rodney Freeman

# HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

## CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural exchange is germane to human growth.

## EDITORIAL

In the July edition of the HARAMBEE FLAME, we ran a graphic depicting the shooting of one African youth by another, with the latter being congratulated by a hooded member of the Ku Klux Klan. Had we sent out some team of super-sleuths and uncovered a scheme in which members of Crips, Bloods, and other gangs were receiving cash payments from the Klan for murdering each other and other African people? No. We've uncovered no evidence of it. However, we need no evidence of such to understand that those Africans who, as part of gangs or on their own, are killing other Africans in America's cities are doing the work of the Klan--the labor of racism.

What is the work of the Klan? It is to protect the political and economic position of dominance held by Caucasians in this country and prevent, by any methods, what Dr. Frances Cress Welsing refers to as "genetic annihilation" of Caucasians. We need not speculate as to the methods the Klan is prepared to use in the course of this work. We have seen these methods in action--the lynching of our people, the castrating of our men, etc. In short, the history of the Klan has made it clear that the murdering of African people is a mainstay in its method of operations. To the extent that young Africans in street gangs, as well as freelancers, are murdering their own people, they are doing the work of the Klan. They are operating on behalf of racism and in the interests of "white supremacy." So by depicting these young Africans as tools or dupes of racism, we're just callin' 'em like we see 'em.

Our rationale for such a depiction of these generally adolescent African males would be weak, if not totally off-base, if it were the case that these murderous actions against their own people had no connection to racism. But there is a connection. And it is clear and multi-faceted. First and most obviously, these males live in a racist society, a society in which African and

other people of color are automatically the "least qualified" for the most secure and/or well-paying jobs and the "most qualified" for low-paying and dead-end jobs or joblessness, in which neighborhoods populated primarily by folks of color are the most likely to be the sites of or near the sites of hazardous waste dumps or plants that release dangerous toxins into the environment, in which African people can be murdered or otherwise brutalized by the police and stand little chance of getting redress through the CRIMINAL "justice" system.

Living in a racist society and victimized by the society's institutions, young African males are often angry and ready to strike out against those around them--generally, other African people. But these young males are not just living in a racist society. They are products of it. They are products of institutions that have indoctrinated them with the belief that, as "blacks," they have little or no worth; of institutions that have convinced them that it is money and the things money can buy that gives a person value; of institutions that have programmed them to believe that Caucasians are all-powerful; of institutions that have effectively gotten the message across to them that manhood is measured in the exercise of sexual power and/or physical force.

What we have, then, is African males who view themselves and other African people as "niggers." Having such a view of themselves and other African people, they attach practically no value to either their own lives or the lives of African people in general. Believing that cash and the material symbols of having cash are supremely important, it is not difficult for these males to participate in the destruction of their people's lives through the pushing of crack or other poisons, to put their own and/or other people's lives in jeopardy over trendy sportswear, gold trinkets, or to otherwise make life-and-death

choices in which the dollar sign is the greatest consideration.

These males, believing that it is the exercise of physical force that makes them men, are enabled to actually feel proud of wasting "trespassers" into "their" 'hoods. It is as though they were acting out the classic Hollywood gun-slinger scenario in which the baddest of the bad grin as they mark their kills with notches on their guns. And like Hollywood's baddest of the bad, these young African males don't fear prison and seem to be numb to the possibility of their own deaths. There are those among them who will kill other Africans because of colors they're wearing, over a flashed gang sign, behind perceived verbal insults, etc.; who will kill Africans they have never met out of some warped notion of revenge. Yet these same gang-bangers will allow themselves to be subjected to any number and manner of degradation, indignity or brutality on the part of police.

Believing themselves to be "niggers," of course they submit to indignities heaped upon them by the police because the police are the ultimate domestic symbol of Caucasian, or slave-master, power. Believing themselves to be "niggers," these African males naturally follow the slave master's example in the expression of "manhood" through physical force against "niggers" because "niggers" are, afterall, worthless.

Since the involvement by these African males in gangs constitutes an effort on their part to achieve and/or exhibit manhood, the graphic depiction(through posters, street theatre, etc.) of African murderers of other Africans as boys or chumps of the Klan, or of the idea of "white supremacy" in general, could be an effective tool in causing these males to question their actions. In addition, such depiction will assist our communities at large in seeing African-on-African violence, at its extraordinary high levels, for what it is--a symptom of American social diseases: rac-

ism, capitalism, hyper-materialism, and related maladies. As our communities understand why gang violence is taking place, we will be enabled to understand that solutions to this plague lie within our own communities and that it is not in our interest to rely on the very forces whose institutions have given rise to our most serious problems to solve these problems for us. This is not to say that America does not owe us, that it doesn't have moral and legal responsibilities to us for the wrong it has done and continues to do. Rather, it is to say that it is sometimes best, even within the context of our present American reality, to take care of our own affairs.

Lastly, though this article has focused on young African males and street gangs, these youths and their actions should not be seen in isolation from the rest of us and our actions. A Crip or Blood or other gang member who does a drive-by is no more or less guilty of African-on-African crime than was Colin Powell, for example, in his over-seeing of the U.S. assault on Panama and the several hundreds of Panamanians of African ancestry who were killed in the process. A young African pushing crack on the streets of Chicago is no more or less guilty of being an enemy of his or her own people than is an older African on Capitol Hill selling out the interests of his people for the greasing of his or her palms by a lobbyist.

Our young people in street gangs are motivated by the same things that motivate most of us, are after the same things most of us are after. The fact that their actions are of a more desperate or extreme sort than we believe the rest of ours are is rooted in the simple fact that we have failed to be the kinds of parents and guardians children need who live in a society that is hostile to them.

-Editor

## EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization (parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. The FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any distinctions between African people based solely on place of birth. References in the FLAME to Africans are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter "black" or other terms designating African people. This is our practice because we do not wish to diminish the integrity and authenticity of the articles we excerpt from.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (p.k.a. D. Rice).

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 1200 words, though longer pieces will not be automatically rejected. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. We are looking for poems which address African folks' lives, the conditions we face, and our struggles to rise above those things which hinder us. Submitted poems should not sacrifice power and beauty for the sake of uniform rhythm and/or rhyme. Send submissions to the editor c/o HARAMBEE FLAME; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68502-0500.

## FROM OTHER SOURCES

### Group Expresses Concern About Upcoming Spike Lee

#### Film On Malcolm X

"In a sharply worded open-letter to filmmaker Spike Lee, a group of New York community activists, calling themselves the United Front to Preserve the Legacy of Malcolm X and the Cultural Revolution, expressed a deep concern that his film on Malcolm X not fall victim to the 'retrograde trend' now sweeping the nation and wiping out the hard-won victories of the past...

"...the letter...includes such noted signers as Amiri Baraka, Elombe Brath, Viola Plummer, Preston Wilcox, Coltrane Chimurenga, Sonny Carson and Father Lawrence Lucas...

"Our distress about Spike's making a film on Malcolm X is based on our analysis of the films he has already made', the writers explained. 'Their caricature of Black people's lives, their dismissal of our struggle and the implication of their description of the Black nation as a few besieged buppies surrounded by an irresponsible lumpen is disturbing to the group'...

"The protesting writers...warn that if Malcolm's life is distorted, belittled or caricatured in any way, 'we will lead a struggle from theatre to theatre across the country, if we have to, to see that the masses of Black people are informed about these distortions and what must be done to oppose them'..."

-from "Group Of Prominent Activists Write Critical 'Open Letter' To Spike Lee," pages 3 and 50, Aug. 3 N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS.

## Controversy Over Execution "Bed" In Louisiana

"On July 21, the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola carried out the state's 20th legal lynching since 1983, as 35-year-old black inmate Andrew Lee Jones was strapped to the electric chair and murdered...

"One day later...Two workers in the metal fabrication shop who were ordered to make a 'hospital examination' table refused, understanding that they would in fact be building the 'bed' to which future death row victims would be strapped for injections.

"The next day, 40 more inmates, including one whose brother had been executed at Angola, refused to work on the death device. As warden John Whitfield threw the protesters into solitary in the 'dungeon', word rapidly spread...and 400 inmates working in the fields put down their hoes in solidarity. Baton Rouge federal judge Frank Polozola authorized an immediate lockdown. Tactical police clad in riot gear were called in and, according to one prisoner, so were the National Guard..."

-from "Louisiana Prisoners Refuse To Build Execution 'Bed,'" pages 12 and 11, Aug. 2 WORKERS VANGUARD

## Panther Militia In Milwaukee To Launch Patrols

"Alderman Michael McGee called a news conference Thursday, July 11th, to respond to the Fire and Police Commission report released July 10th. The report, which announced that the crime rate in Milwaukee was the lowest in the 10 cities its size, prompted Alderman McGee to hold this news conference...

"McGee...stated that...Forty percent of the city's murders have taken place in McGee's 10th

district. 'I can't understand how the commission can report such a rosy picture when things in the inner city remain so dismal', McGee said.

"The increase in crime combined with the lack of jobs for inner city residents and the current hoopla of the annual Circus Parade has caused Alderman McGee to call a state of emergency for the Black community.

"McGee, who feels that the Black community is getting the short end of the stick when it comes to solving its problems, announced that his Black Panther Militia will begin to patrol the inner city and try to talk with members in the community about controlling Black on Black crime...

"The patrol that McGee is planning will be unarmed and will concentrate on areas in the city with higher crime rates. McGee will hold a rally to announce other initiatives that the patrols have in mind...

"The Black Panther Militia...provided security and assistance to about 40 senior citizens from the Elderly Shopping and Errand Service, Inc. and Bethesda Community Senior Citizens Center at their annual picnic. The event...was held July 13th at Washington Park...

"Brenda Cooper and Worthington Hortman, directors of the Senior Service Centers and organizers of the picnic, were very happy to have the Militia present, especially in light of the rising crimes committed against senior citizens..."

-from "McGee Responds To Homicide Increase; Will Organize 'Unarmed Patrol' To Curb Crime," pages 1 and 8, July 20 MILWAUKEE COURIER

## Future Of "Black" Colleges Tied To Upcoming U.S.

### Supreme Court Decision

"This fall, the U.S. Supreme Court will decide a case involving charges that three Southern states discriminated against historically Black state-supported colleges and universities in allocating funds.

"If the plaintiffs win, it could mean increased resources and programs for the nation's 35 historically Black public colleges and increased access for African-Americans to predominantly white state institutions.

"But if the Court rejects the suit, it would mean that historically separate Black and white state-supported university systems would be forced to merge their governing boards and operations--an outcome that some African-American educators fear could mean that institutions such as Grambling and Southern University in Louisiana would lose their identity or be dismantled.

"The case before the Court is a class-action suit brought by Black plaintiffs against the governor of Mississippi. They charge the governor and state education officials with discriminating against historically Black colleges by allocating a disproportionately higher amount of resources to predominantly white institutions. The case has been consolidated with similar lawsuits from Louisiana and Alabama..."

-from "Supreme Court To Mull Black Colleges' Future," page 5, Aug. 14 THE GUARDIAN(N.Y.)

## Effects Of Disclosure Of Government Funding of

### Buthlezi's Inkatha

"...The revelation that the South African police

secretly channeled funds to the Inkatha Freedom has damaged Pretoria's credibility both at home and abroad, throwing the government into turmoil.

..."The scandal has also put brakes on the lifting of economic sanctions. Japan, which was expected to lift the measures in early August, now says it will wait for other countries to do so before it makes a move. And Spain said in July that it will now halt its push for the European Community to drop sanctions...

"The ANC is meanwhile enjoying an unprecedented level of unity with other opposition forces. Its alliance with the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions is running smoothly. Its months of squabbles with the Pan-Africanist Congress and other black consciousness-oriented organizations have eased into a cautious understanding rhythm...

-from "'Inkathagate' Scandal Strengthens ANC's Hand," page 14, Aug. 14 THE GUARDIAN

### Supreme Court Nominee's Connections

"Thousands of residents in New York City are receiving mail from a J.A. Parker of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation for Public Policy Research Inc....

"In the packet of information from the foundation, which claims to be 'the nation's Black conservative voice of action', New Yorkers are asked to sign a petition and donate whatever funds they can to 'stop Jackson's D.C. statehood bill'. The cover letter is signed by J.A. Parker.

"This is the same J.A. Parker uncovered last week in these pages as a paid agent for the racist government of South Africa....

"...Parker, along with his cohort William Keyes, through their firm, International Public Affairs Consultants, was instrumental in arranging meetings between their client and important U.S. political figures.

"One such meeting was a reception held for the South African ambassador in 1987. Thomas, then head of the EEOC, was invited to the affair by Parker and Keyes, who were certified paid agents working in behalf of South Africa, was enough to suggest that Thomas may have been privy to decisions affecting U.S. congressional policy...

-from "Who Is This Friend of Clarence Thomas Named J.A. Parker," pages 4 and 50, Aug. 17  
N.Y. AMSTERDAM NEWS

### Opposition To Status Quo In Zaire Continues

"The Sacred Union of the Opposition, a coalition of 131 pro-democracy parties and organizations, continued its boycott of Zaire's national conference this week.

"The conference was to function as a national meeting...with the goal of transitioning the Central African nation to democracy after 26 years of dictatorial rule by Mobutu Sese Seko. The opposition walked out of the conference on August 8, one day after it opened, when it became clear that Mobutu had stacked the meeting with his followers posing as representatives of democracy organizations...

"The Associated Press reported on August 14 that Mobutu's security service is threatening to release information implicating him in a number of assassinations. Many employees of the agency have been on strike for almost a month...

"The New York Times reported on August 17 that South African military officers are in Zaire training Mobutu's forces, a fact that sheds some doubt on earlier reports that Mobutu was preparing to

## REVIEW

### APARTHEID: THE UNTOLD STORY by Corbin Seavers

Corbin Seavers co-founded the Bishop Tutu Refugee Fund, a non-profit organization assisting refugees and other victims of apartheid, in June of 1985. As projects director, he travelled extensively throughout Southern Africa, where he gathered information on the region's refugee crisis, as well as information and views regarding the political struggles in Azania("So. Africa"). In his introduction to APARTHEID: THE UNTOLD STORY, Seavers states:

"Based upon misinformation, many African-Americans shun supporting the PAC(Pan Africanist Congress) and thereby provide almost exclusive support for the ANC(African National Congress). Too many Black people incorrectly equate solidarity with the struggle against Apartheid with supporting the ANC, in all that it says and does."

He further states:

"The majority of white western newspapers and magazines, regardless of political persuasion, focus almost exclusively upon the ANC, giving the false impression that this liberation movement serves as the sole voice for victims of apartheid."

Following his introduction, Seavers provides a brief recounting of the history of foreign occupation of Azania and of the establishment and maintenance of apartheid, making the point that "African people are not engaged in a life and death struggle for desegregated toilets or integrated bedrooms...Theirs is a just struggle for self-determination and a return of their stolen country." (Emphasis added) He then gives a historical overview of the birth and life of the PAC and lists and briefly elaborates of various aims, objectives, and positions taken by this

(Cont. on p. 14)

# POETRY/STORY/GRAPHICS

## LEGISLATIVE SATIRE

Learn about a LEGISLATURE

that is purely make-believe,  
Peopled by fictitious solons,  
weak of will, who did deceive  
Constituents and legislative colleagues,  
cherishing the lie above the truth,  
Because deception makes it easy to get by.

Lying, tricking, scheming,  
they assume a gross, deceptive role,  
Eventually, their falsity  
may take a devastating toll.  
(Every morning, preachers come  
and offer up their little prayer,  
Knowing full well, righteousness  
cannot survive that poisoned air.  
Knowing, too, the Jesus Christ  
to whom they lift their voice as Boss,

If he came into that place  
would be again nailed to the cross.  
Many ways there be to kill that Christ  
- or make his spirit die:  
Crucify his body with the nails;  
his spirit with the lie.)

Practised liars take the cloth of truth  
and by manipulation  
Shape its contours, like a skillful tailor,  
to each situation;  
Fold a pleat here, turn a hem there,  
cut and sew as necessary  
To contrive a verbal fabric  
- to trick friend or adversary.  
Some be wedded to deception  
for so long a time that they  
Do never speak unvarnished truth;  
their nay means aye,  
their aye means nay.

-Ernie Chambers

organization.

It is common, in the case where there are competing factions within a single liberation movement, to find proponents of certain organizations trashing their rivals in the battle for the hearts and minds of the people they seek and/or claim to represent. But while Seavers strongly expresses the belief that the ANC has no right to claim to be the sole legitimate representative of African people in Azania, neither does he claim such a right for the PAC nor attack the ANC.

Seavers' method is that of presenting the reality of settler-ruled Azania and giving the reader an introduction to the PAC, enabling the reader to determine for him or herself whether and to what degree the material conditions in Azania warrant and/or necessitate the existence of an organization such as the Pan Africanist Congress.

Seavers' allegation that there is very little information provided to the public by the Western press and that that press focuses almost exclusively on the ANC in its reportage of the liberation struggle in Azania can hardly be argued with. Thus, APARTHEID: THE UNTOLD STORY is a valuable resource in that it provides those interested in African people's struggle against European minority rule in Azania with a more balanced picture of that struggle than the Western press allows them/us. In addition, the fact that Seavers does not use his booklet as a vehicle for sectarian trashing of PAC rivals is refreshing.

-----  
ZAIRE...

to leave the country..."

-from "Opposition Continues Boycott Of Zaire National Conference," page 5, Aug. 29 THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE (N.Y., N.Y.)

## BACK IN TIME

When we heard that the man with the white flesh was journeying down the Lualaba (Lualaba-Congo) we were open-mouthed with astonishment. We stood still. All night long the drums announced the strange news--a man with white flesh! That man, we said to ourselves, has a white skin. He must have got that from the river-kingdom. He will be one of our brothers who were drowned in the river. All life comes from the water, and in the water he has found life. Now he is coming back to us, he is coming home...

We will prepare a feast, I ordered, we will go to meet our brother and escort him into the village with rejoicing! We donned our ceremonial garb. We assembled the great canoes. We listened for the gong which would announce our brother's presence on the Lualaba. Presently the cry was heard: He is approaching the Lohali! Now he enters the river! Halloh! We swept forward, my canoe leading, the others following, with songs of joy and with dancing, to meet the first white man our eyes had beheld, and to do him honor.

But as we drew near his canoes there were loud reports, bang! bang! and fire-staves spat bits of iron at us. We were paralyzed with fright; our mouths hung wide open and we could not shut them. Things such as we had never seen, never heard of, never dreamed of--they were the work of evil spirits! Several of my men plunged into the water... What for? Did they fly to safety? No--for others fell down also, in the canoes. Some screamed dreadfully, others were silent--they were dead, and blood flowed from little holes in their bodies...

Source: THROUGH AFRICAN EYES: CULTURES IN CHANGE  
Edited by Leon E. Clark; Part IV: The  
Colonial Experience

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## "Joint Venture": Inside/Outside Communications

In future editions of MO BETTER NEWS, we will list the various individuals and institutions who have volunteered to be pen partners of our men and women behind bars. Their names and addresses will be published periodically...We urge individuals and institutions to contribute to Joint Venture. This will make it possible to provide an open public forum for dialogue between our incarcerated brothers and sisters and the community-at-large. We especially encourage those who have some insight into the problems of prisoners to write a column or a letter, on a regular basis, for this section...Items submitted for publication should not exceed 300 words and, regretfully, cannot be returned. Since there is no charge for papers mailed to our brothers and sisters in penal institutions, we urge you to support our efforts with your own subscription, a business ad and, if possible, by urging your religious or secular organization to sponsor a page in the Joint Venture section of MOBETTER NEWS.

MOBETTER NEWS  
P.O. Box 1447  
South Holland, ILL 60473

## Amistad Committee To Dedicate Memorial

The Amistad Committee of New Haven, Connecticut will be holding a commemoration and celebration Sept. 25-27 of the June 1839 seizure of the merchant ship La Amistad by its African captives, led by Cinque, and their eventual attainment of freedom. The celebration will include a concert by Sweet Honey In The Rock, a community cultural festival, and other events. The committee is soliciting ads for its commemorative program. For more information, contact the Amistad Committee at 311 Temple St.; New Haven, CT; 06511. Or call (203) 772-2788.

Subscribe to the HARAMBEE FLAME

\$7 per 12 issues/1 year

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.

P.O. Box 2500

Lincoln, NE

68542-2500

Send money order or check.